

AJ Advisory Council – Meeting Minutes

March 25, 2014

PRESENT:

Greg Allen, Deputy, Humboldt County Sheriff's Office	Bret Smith, Chief, Ferndale Police Department
Kent Bradshaw, Instructor, Humboldt County Office of Education	Jeff Cummings, CR CTE Dean
Tom Chapman, Chief, Arcata Police Department	Joe Hash, CR AJ Dean
Bill Damiano, Humboldt County Probation	Garry Patrick, CR Maintenance
Bill Dobberstein, Chief, Fortuna Police Department	Kathy Smith, CR President
Mike Downey, Sheriff, Humboldt County Sheriff's Office	Gary Sokolow, CR AJ Faculty
Andrew Mills, Chief, Eureka Police Department	Trey Gibbs, CR student
Doug Plack, Chief, Crescent City Police Department	Forrest Marerro, student
	Linda Souza, CR student

Ron Waters called the meeting to order at 10:00 with a thank you to all for attending and a promise that meetings will be taking place more often in the future.

Gary Sokolow, Faculty for Administration of Justice, presented his suggestion for putting **AJ through the process of "Program Revitalization, Suspension and/or Discontinuation"**, an evaluation tool provided for in Administrative Procedure 4021. He felt that AJ has had declining enrollment since 1992. "What is the point of the program when training for careers can be done via the Basic Academy, Probation and Corrections Academies?" He made it clear that he was only referring to the 2-year degree program NOT the Basic Academy. "Are we serving our community?" He distributed a survey for attendees to complete, to determine whether the current AJ program was relevant. He noted that it was difficult to find part-time faculty to teach courses. In addition, the college was not being supportive of online programs (two technical support positions in Distance Learning have been vacated with retirements but have not been filled).

Sheriff Downey asked if enrollment was down Statewide which Sokolow confirmed it was not. "If it is relevant statewide, why isn't it relevant here? Are we not doing our job? Is there a disconnect? CR is vital to keeping us relevant".

Arcata Chief Tom Chapman said that "absolutely", there was value in the program. People can get entry-level jobs but cannot progress without an education. He agreed with Sheriff Downey that he would hate to see it go. He mentioned the proliferation of online classes at other colleges that his officers have taken. He was surprised Kent Bradshaw's programs had not brought a higher demand for AJ courses.

Kent Bradshaw said that his students are interested but are not mature. They tend to take a semester or two at CR then join the military which makes them more viable candidates for the Academy. Sokolow was also concerned that teachers had told him that counselors at the high schools have recommended against taking classes at CR.

Chief Probation Officer Bill Damiano felt the broader the foundation, the better. He would prefer to hire people with Bachelor degrees but has trouble finding them. He would like CR to link with HSU to facilitate receipt of 4-year degrees. Sokolow said that the College of the Redwoods program deals with how the system works where HSU's comes from the standpoint that the system is "broken". Sacramento State would be a more similar connection for CR's program. Damiano felt that HSU's social justice focus was not too far from practice.

CR President Kathy Smith explained SB1440, the purpose of which was to coordinate community colleges and CSUs, trying to get students through the system faster and into jobs. Is there a demand? We are instituting "Associate Degrees of Transfer" to connect the levels.

EPD Chief Mills stated that he wasn't concerned as much about the AJ degree as much as the "thinking skills". There is a need for people to develop themselves professionally in topics such as leadership, problem-solving, and community policing.

Chief Chapman agreed that advanced writing and thinking skills outweigh all else and have “tremendous value”.

Sheriff Downey noted that there are younger people with interest but without skills and maturity. They are vital to the future of law enforcement but just aren’t ready. It would be good to have classes that keep their interest while they develop.

Fortuna Chief Dobberstein shared that he taught an evidence class several years ago that had forty students but no local law enforcement. He recalled that, prior to his attending the Basic Academy, he had taken AJ classes and the knowledge he gained helped prepare him for topics in the Academy. His officers have been taking classes online. He felt that more outreach would help attract more students. Sokolow responded that the hybrid classes he has presented had live interaction and immediate response to comments and questions.

Crescent City Chief Plack said we needed to look at our audience; that most will do things the easiest way which is online. Closing the program would “cut Del Norte off at the knees”, leave a void. The Explorer program is flourishing. AJ courses stimulate students. Personal interaction, rather than online, gives these students a better idea of what is expected. There is a need for “trade schools”.

Deputy Greg Allen noted how most students are still in the decision-making process and that the AJ classes help them to understand the skills needed for potential careers. Giving them a variety of choices helps their maturity level as they work through the process.

Kent Bradshaw knows that most of his students are there “just because they need a class”. Many are immature and have the potential to make poor choices affecting what will be their “background”. “Kids are a moving target”.

Ferndale Chief Bret Smith feels that students really need critical thinking as well as conflict management skills.

Student Linda Souza had noticed CRs classes were highlighted on the Humboldt Access channel on TV. Had not seen the AJ ad but was glad to know it was included and could help with outreach.

Chief Chapman asked “who is the audience?” for the AJ program, noting that 18-year-olds aren’t likely to understand courses intended for officers already in the profession. Also, what about Criminology and linking to the HSU program? Gary Sokolow explained that Criminology is a difficult topic to teach at a lower level and has been removed by the Chancellor’s office and intended to be taught only in upper-division courses.

Chief Mills stated that, in order to progress, people in the business must understand the Justice system.

Sheriff Downey noted that hands-on classes are far more interesting than the theory they involve.

Ron Waters recognized that the group felt there was value in revamping the program to more closely align with community policing and critical thinking topics, recognizing a desire within the group to re-examine the program. He **stressed a need for new instructors to freshen the program**; ones who are active and current in the profession. They are required to have a Bachelor’s degree and two years or an Associate degree and six years of experience.

Ron Waters voiced a need for a **female Lifetime Fitness instructor** for the Basic Academy and repeated an **ongoing need for additional Driving and Defensive Tactics instructors** for Advanced Officer course.

Chief Chapman wondered what the problem is with getting these instructors as it is a constant need. What is the obstacle? He noted that Arcata has supports the Academy by providing instructors because the Academy supports the community.

Sheriff Downey noted a training budget that is “through the roof” and a desire to bring more instructor courses here rather than having to send officers out of town at a much higher cost. He also commented that the training program at CR “used to be more robust”.

Chief Mills would like to see a Defensive Tactics instructor course brought to CR to train new instructors. He will commit EPD to this effort.

Ron Waters asked for suggestions on courses that might be presented. He suggested that Arcata Chief Chapman might present a course on Drug House Abatement based on the program his department has implemented.

Other suggestions were promotional-themed such as dealing with discipline issues, budgeting and employee evaluations.

He also explained the change to the course certification process through the College: In the past, all advanced officer courses were run under the AJ-199 (Advanced Officer Training: Individual Topics) heading. Since the Chancellors office now does not allow continued repeating of a course (as would be the case if a student took a number of AJ-199 courses), each individual course must be vetted through the curriculum process and given an individual course number. It takes longer to get through this process with a new course where, previously, the process was in-house and could be put on much sooner.

UPCOMING COURSES:

- Radar – there will be a CHP instructor to teach it in the summer
- Traffic Accident Investigation – tentatively planned for October
 - This instructor would like to offer basic, intermediate and advanced levels of this course as well as one on “how to diagram a scene” using Visio.
- PC832 – both Firearms as well as Arrest and Control will be offered in May
- FOS classes scheduled for March and April are full; more will be scheduled
- LEADS (Driving Simulator) will be going to Del Norte soon
- (behind-the-wheel) Driving will be scheduled in September
- 11550 Drug Identification will be held in the Fall
- Public Safety Dispatch will be offered in Spring 2015 as a semester class
- Intermediate level A.I.C.C. (Academy Instructor Certification Course) as well as Instructor update courses will be planned for the near future.

Good of the order:

- Gary Sokolow thanked the group for their input and looked forward to reading their suggestions on the surveys.
- Fortuna Chief Bill Dobberstein felt the program needed some good public relations and publicity to bring in more students.

Meeting adjourned at 11:35 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Debbie Topping
Recording Secretary